

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

    determining that a first expected observation event has not occurred for a first mail piece;

    determining that a second expected observation event has occurred for a second mail piece; and

    providing an alarm indication with respect to the first mail piece based at least in part on non-occurrence of the first expected observation event and on occurrence of the second expected observation event.

2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

    prior to the determining steps, simultaneously delivering the first and second mail pieces to a postal authority.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the first mail piece exhibits a first postal code to direct delivery via a first post office and the second mail piece exhibits a second postal code to direct delivery via the first post office.

4. The method according to claim 3, wherein the first and second postal codes are identical to each other.

5. The method according to claim 4, wherein each of the first and second postal codes is indicated as a POSTNET barcode.

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein each of the first and second mail pieces exhibits a respective PLANET barcode.
7. The method according to claim 3, wherein each of the first and second postal codes is indicated as a POSTNET barcode.
8. The method according to claim 7, wherein each of the first and second mail pieces exhibits a PLANET barcode.
9. The method according to claim 2, wherein the first mail piece includes a credit or debit card and the second mail piece does not include a credit or debit card.
10. The method according to claim 9, wherein the second mail piece has an appearance that is substantially different from an appearance of the first mail piece.
11. A mail piece tracking system, comprising:
  - first means for determining that a first expected observation event has not occurred for a first mail piece;
  - second means for determining that a second expected observation event has occurred for a second mail piece; and
  - third means, operatively coupled to the first and second means, for providing an alarm indication with respect to the first mail piece based at least in part on non-occurrence of the first expected observation event and on occurrence of the second expected observation event.

12. The mail piece tracking system according to claim 11, further comprising:
  - an observation event database for storing observation event information;
  - a mailing information database for storing information indicative of delivery of the first and second mail pieces to a postal authority; and
  - a historical information database for storing information indicative of a sequence of expected observation events for the first and second mail pieces;
  - the first and second means being operatively coupled to the observation event database, to the mailing information database and to the historical information database.
13. The mail piece tracking system according to claim 11, further comprising:
  - a processor programmed to constitute at least part of both the first and second means.
14. A mail piece tracking system, comprising:
  - a processor;
  - a storage device operatively coupled to the processor and storing a program to control the processor to:
    - determine that a first expected observation event has not occurred for a first mail piece;
    - determine that a second expected observation event has occurred for a second mail piece; and
    - provide an alarm indication with respect to the first mail piece based at least in part on non-occurrence of the first expected observation event and on occurrence of the second expected observation event.

15. The mail piece tracking system according to claim 14, wherein the storage device further stores:

an observation event database for storing observation event information;

a mailing information database for storing information indicative of delivery of the first and second mail pieces to a postal authority; and

a historical information database for storing information indicative of a sequence of expected observation events for the first and second mail pieces.

16. An article of manufacture comprising:

a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied therein for tracking a first mail piece, the computer readable program code means in said article of manufacture comprising:

computer readable program code means for causing a computer to determine that a first expected observation event has not occurred for a first mail piece;

computer readable program code means for causing the computer to determine that a second expected observation event has occurred for a second mail piece; and

computer readable program code means for causing the computer to provide an alarm indication with respect to the first mail piece based at least in part on non-occurrence of the first expected observation event and on occurrence of the second expected observation event.